

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1-6. (Canceled).

7. (Previously Presented) A method for activating a two-stage switching valve including a first stage having a smaller flow cross section and a second stage having a larger flow cross section, the switching valve being situated between a main brake cylinder and a hydraulic pump in a hydraulic brake system, the method comprising:

activating the switching valve in a first phase by a control signal having a small amplitude to first open only the first stage of the switching valve for a predetermined period of time; and

activating the switching valve in a second phase by the control signal having a higher amplitude.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the control signal is temperature- and voltage-compensated.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

determining a differential pressure prevailing at the switching valve; and

performing the activating in the first phase and the second phase only within a predetermined pressure range.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the pressure range lies between at least 10 bar and 30 bar.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the control signal has a magnitude in the first phase such that the first stage of the switching valve is open for at least 10 ms before the second stage opens.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the control signal has a

magnitude in the first phase such that the first stage of the switching valve is open for at least 30 ms before the second stage opens.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the second phase begins no earlier than 30 ms after the beginning of the first phase.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the predetermined pressure range lies between at least between 5 bar and 35 bar.

15. (New) The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

- determining a differential pressure prevailing at the switching valve;
- performing the activating in the first phase and the second phase only within a predetermined pressure range; and
- determining if a pressure lies within a predetermined pressure range, wherein the control signal is temperature-compensated and voltage-compensated;
- wherein the pressure range lies between at least 5 bar and 35 bar, and
- wherein the control signal has a magnitude in the first phase such that the first stage of the switching valve is open for at least 10 ms before the second stage opens.

16. (New) The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the second phase begins no earlier than 30 ms after the beginning of the first phase, and wherein the predetermined pressure range lies between at least between 10 bar and 30 bar.

17. (New) The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

- determining a differential pressure prevailing at the switching valve;
- performing the activating in the first phase and the second phase only within a predetermined pressure range; and
- determining if a pressure lies within a predetermined pressure range, wherein the control signal is temperature-compensated and voltage-compensated;
- wherein the pressure range lies between at least 5 bar and 35 bar, and
- wherein the control signal has a magnitude in the first phase such that the first stage of the switching valve is open for at least 30 ms before the second stage opens.

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18. (New) The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the second phase begins no earlier than 30 ms after the beginning of the first phase, and wherein the predetermined pressure range lies between at least between 10 bar and 30 bar.